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February 15, 2018

In Memoriam: W. Ray Cleere, President Emeritus of Piedmont College, Demorest, GA

Piedmont College is affiliated with the United Church of Christ and the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches.

W. Ray Cleere, 81, of Atlanta, died on January 26, 2018 of complications from Alzheimer's disease. Born in Atlanta, he loved the city and often told stories about his grandmother's boardinghouse on Kennesaw Avenue and his first job as a bread truck driver. After graduating from Bass High School, he went on to earn degrees from Appalachian State University, University of Mississippi, and University of Georgia.

In 1995, Dr. Cleere become president of Piedmont College. During his tenure, he developed academic programs, but students also took note when he and the college chaplain walked their dogs, Emma and Rosie, on campus. This "courtship" led to their marriage in 2006. Upon retirement in 2011, Ray taught graduate courses for Piedmont and served as a trustee of Rabun Gap-Nacoochee School. Throughout his career, Dr. Cleere was known for encouraging individual students and colleagues to make the most of their potential.

He is survived by his devoted wife, Ashley Cook Cleere; loving daughter, Jennifer Cherry Cleere (Kelly Burns); sister, Adrienne Cleere (Robert Moor); and extended family.

A memorial service will be held on February 17 at 1:00pm at First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, 105 Courtland St., NE, Atlanta. A reception will follow. Memorial contributions may be made to Piedmont College, PO Box 429, Demorest, GA 30535. A full obituary and guest book are available at www.asturner.com.

From the Conference Minister:
A Year of Discernment for the Southeast Conference

Dear Friends,

Thank you to all of you who responded to my request for your thoughts about what the conference does. Today, I have a new question: what could the conference do to help your ministry? These questions are more than just questions. They are ways to get to what is the essence of conference ministry. Once we all have an idea of what is essential for conference ministry, then we can begin to dream how to do it in ways that make the most sense for the Southeast Conference.

I have been asked if there is something people can read during this process. Two books that I am reading that have ideas that make sense to me are: Canoeing the Mountains: Christian Leadership in Unchartered Territory by Tod Bolsinger and Institutional Intelligence: How to Build an Effective Organization by Gordon T. Smith. Reading one or both of these books will give you a good basis for our conversations this spring.

I hope to have four regional meetings in April and May. If your congregation would like to host one of these conversations, please let me know.

Lenten Blessings,
Marie

Spring Grant Cycle Open

Capital Campaign Grants Applications are available on our website for the Spring 2018 funding cycle. Applications will be accepted January 15, 2018 thru March 05, 2018.

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FRIENDLY REMINDER

The deadline for submission of Capital Campaign Grants for the Spring 2018 funding cycle is fast approaching. Please remember the deadline for

submitting your applications is **March 5, 2018.** The application, guidelines and instructions can be found on our website, secucc.org.

Please feel free to contact Carrole Moss, Generosity Coordinator, at cmoss@secucc.org should you have questions or concerns. We look forward to hearing from and supporting you in your projects.

Healthy Boundaries Training

Through our partnership with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Georgia, we are offering Healthy Boundaries 101 Fundamentals from 9 am-4 pm on March 10,2018 at First Christian Church, Tucker, GA. This workshop meet the requirements of the SECUCC for Healthy Boundaries training for clergy. You may sign up for this course at: http://gadisciples.org/clergy/HealthyBoundariesworkshop.asp.

Authorized Ministers Information Review

The Authorized Ministers Annual review has started. If you have not already completed yours, please do so soon. Thank you to everyone who has already filled out and returned the review. There are two ways you can return your Annual Review:

1. The preferred way is to complete the online form.
2. Alternatively, you can download a PDF of the form, print and mail it to the Conference Office: PO Box 1950, Decatur, Georgia 30031.

If you have any questions, please contact the Conference Registrar at

registrar@secucc.org or 404-719-572. We will be mailing out hard copies to those who have not completed the review next week. Please submit your completed Annual Review **by March 8, 2018.** We will be following up if you do not respond.

Yearbook Reporting: Submit your Church Statistics

It's time again for reporting of Yearbook statistics for the past year. The UCC Data Hub is open and ready for your submission. If you are responsible for reporting your Yearbook Statistics for your church and have not received information from the Conference, please contact Heather at hbardole@secucc.org or 404-719-6572 to receive your churches information. Yearbook reports are due by March 7, 2018.

Prayer List

We are continuing the process of praying for authorized ministers,

congregations, and ministry groups throughout 2018. We encourage you to include these prayer requests in your local church newsletter, share them with your prayer circle, and include them in your own prayers. Click here to download the entire 2018 prayer list.

Week of February 19

- Central Congregational UCC; Atlanta, Georgia
- Southeast Conference Board of Directors
- Henrietta Andrews
- Betsy Taylor Flory
- Truman Moore
- Charlene Burch

Week of February 26

- Trinity Congregational UCC; Athens, Alabama
- SEC Standing Committees, Advisory Committees, Task Forces
- Tim Downs
- Chris Lyman Waldron
- Albert Ghergich
- Darryl Trimiew
- Marvin Morgan

Churches in Transition

First Congregational, Birmingham, AL; Pilgrimage, Marietta, GA; Garden of Grace, Columbia, SC; Peace, Clemson, SC; Sandy Creek, Lafayette, AL; United Church of Cookeville, Cookeville, TN

News from our Local Congregations

On Sunday, February 4th, Rev. Kate Stulce was ordained and installed as the Associate Pastor of Pilgrim Congregational UCC in Chattanooga.

Rev. Traci Blackmon To Preach at First Congregational UCC, Atlanta March 11th, 2018.

First Congregational UCC is excited to share with you that **Rev. Traci Blackmon, Executive Minister, Justice and Local Ministries, United Church of Christ National Setting, Cleveland, OH** will be the Women's Day speaker on March 11, 2018 at First Congregational UCC, Atlanta, GA, Rev. Dwight Andrews, Pastor at the 11am worship.

Women's Day Worship is part of the Women's Weekend, A weekend of purpose driven faith, fellowship, fun, and commitment March 9th-11th.The Plenary Speaker is Rev. Jennifer Eichelberger and panelists include: Desiree Pedescleaux Andrews, Sonjia Young, LaVerne Dixon,Yvonne Bryant Johnson, Jamila Oni, Jacqueline Bunn, and Barbara Rawls. Tickets for Friday and Saturday are $35 for adults, $20 for students and seniors. Tickets available at First Church and on the day of the event.

News from the Wider Church

ACT NOW! Unite to End Racism Rally in DC

UCC General Minister and President, Rev. Dr. John Dorhauer is inviting all conferences and congregations to join him in participating in a event sponsored by the National Council of Churches commemorating the 50th anniversary of the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr. The event will be held on the mall in Washington, DC on April 4, 2018. There will be a worship service the afternoon before at the Greek Orthodox Church in DC. Leaders from many faith traditions will gather for worship and truth-telling, calling the nation to seek healing from our racist legacies. If you are interested in attending or in leading a group from the SEC that will travel to Washington, DC, please let Interim Conference Minister, Marie Bacchiocchi know. Also, if you would like to organize a similar event in your area of the conference, please also contact Marie. The website for the event is: http://nationalcouncilofchurches.us/actnow/

Training and Learning Opportunities

New PATHWAYS Classes Start in March

PATHWAYS Theological Education is offering courses beginning in March:

UCC History & Polity for $650.00
March 7-June 5, 2018 (12 Weeks + Holy Week break)
The Rev. Dr. Anita Bradshaw will facilitate this course

Level One Course: Ethics and a Life of Meaning for $375
March 7 to April 24, 2018
The Rev. Dr. Ruth Shaver will facilitate this course

Level Three Course: Theology in the Public Square for $375
March 7 to April 24, 2018
The Rev. Dr. Trish Greeves is facilitating

PATHWAYS is also available to individuals who want to deepen their

knowledge and Christian faith but are not following a call to authorized ministry. Learn more about each of these courses and register online at www.pathways-ucc.org. If you would like more information, please contact PATHWAYS at pathways@secucc.org. Please share this announcement with others.

Job Openings

Career Opportunity! Church Relations Associates

If you are passionate for Back Bay Mission (a United Church of Christ ministry), have existing relationships among regional or national UCC members and church leadership and are willing to travel, then consider one of two part time development and fund raising positions (Church Relations Associates) at Back Bay Mission in Biloxi Mississippi.

The successful candidate might be a recently retired UCC clergy or lay person with a passion for Back Bay Mission and/or a former Back Bay Mission Trip participant. For more detailed information, click here for complete position description. Interested persons should send resumes to Dr. Alice Graham, Executive Director, agraham@thebackbaymission.org or PO Box 288, Biloxi MS 39533

As Back Bay Mission Board Members residing in the Southeast Conference, we invite you to think about ideal candidates for these positions and ask you to please encourage them to apply. Thank you.

Mary Ruth, Pleasant Hill TN
Wilmer Brown, Rex GA

Director of Music Position Opening in Marietta, GA

Pilgrimage UCC in Marietta, GA has an opening for a part-time, paid staff position as Music Director, with duties primarily on Sunday mornings and Wednesday evenings, along with some additional time during Christmas, Holy Week, and Easter seasons. The music style of PUCC is traditional and gospel hymns, supplemented with some folk and jazz compositions. Congregational singing will be primarily led using the UCC Hymnal; therefore familiarity with this is important. The Music Director works with the Ministerial Staff, with oversight by the Worship Committee. Work is reviewed through observation, supervisory evaluation, and committee and

congregational feedback for effectiveness. Providing music for wedding and funerals is *not* included in the basic responsibilities. The Music Director will be consulted regarding these and similar “extraordinary events”, and will be compensated separately for the time required (details handled by the event coordinator). For full details and more information, please contact the Hiring Committee at worship@pilgrimageucc.org with the subject line “Music Director Application.”

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